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## **A Safety Plan for Domestic Violence**

### **A Plan For Protection From Domestic Violence**

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### **1. Safety During an Explosive Incident**

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- A. If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area that has access to an exit and not in a bathroom, kitchen or anywhere near weapons.
- B. Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator or stairwell would be best.
- C. Identify a neighbor you can tell about the violence and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- D. Devise a code word to use with your children, family, friends and neighbors when you need the police.
- E. Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if

- you don't think you will need to).
- F. Use your own instincts and judgment. If the situation is very dangerous, consider giving the abuser what he or she wants to calm him or her down. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.
  - G. Always remember--**You don't deserve to be hit or threatened.**

## 2. Safety When Preparing to Leave

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- A. Open a savings account in your own name to establish or increase your independence. Think of other ways in which you can increase your independence.
- B. Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and extra clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly.
- C. Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- D. Keep the shelter phone number close at hand and keep some change or a calling card on you at all times for emergency phone calls.
- E. Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your batterer. **Remember--Leaving your batterer is the most dangerous time.**

## 3. Safety In Your Own Home

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- A. Change the locks on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows.
- B. Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- C. Inform your children's school, day care, etc., about who has permission to pick up your children.
- D. Inform neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see him or her near your home.

## 4. Safety With an Order for Protection

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- A. Keep your Order for Protection on you at all times. (When you change your purse, that should be the first thing that goes in it.)
- B. Call the police if your partner violates the Order for Protection.
- C. Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- D. Inform family, friends and neighbors that you have an Order for Protection

in effect.

## **5. Safety On the Job and In Public**

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- A. Decide who at work you will inform of your situation. This should include office or building security (provide a picture of your batterer if possible.)
- B. Arrange to have someone screen your telephone calls if possible.
- C. Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car, bus or train. Use a variety of routes to go home by if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home (i.e., in your car, on the bus, etc.)

## **6. Your Safety and Emotional Health**

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- A. If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.
- B. If you have to communicate with your partner, determine the safest way to do so.
- C. Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs.
- D. Read books and articles to help you feel stronger.
- E. Decide who you can call to talk freely and openly to give you the support you need.
- F. Plan to attend a women's or victim's support group for at least 2 weeks to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and the relationship.

## **7. If You Are a Teen In a Violent Dating Relationship**

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- A. Decide which friend, teacher, relative or police officer you can tell.
- B. Contact an advocate at the court to get information on how to obtain an Order for Protection and make a safety plan.

## **Checklist--What You Need to Take When You Leave:**

- Identification

- Driver's license
- Children's birth certificate
- Your birth certificate
- Money
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Bank books
- Checkbooks
- Insurance papers
- House and car keys
- Medications
- Small objects you could sell
- Address book
- Pictures
- Medical records of all your family members
- Social security card
- Welfare identification
- School records
- Work permits
- Green card
- Passport
- Divorce or paternity papers
- Jewelry
- Children's small toys
- Other

### Organizations That Can Help

Police--emergency response	911
Domestic Violence Recorded Information Line	(206) 205-5555
WA State Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-562-6025

